

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7398

S E C R E T ROME 7358

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: IT, PINT

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER MORO'S VIEWS ON ITALIAN POLITICAL SCENE

1. I HAD AN OCCASION TODAY TO HAVE AN EXCHANGE OF VIEWS WITH  
RPIME MINISTER MORO ON THE CURRENT POLITICAL SCENE. MORO BEGAN  
BY SAYING THE DC WAS FACING THE ELECTIONS IN THE WORST CONDITIONS  
POSSIBLE. HE REFERRED TO THE FALLING LIRA, GALLOPING INFLATION,  
ACCUSATIONS OF DC INVOLVEMENT WITH THE CIA, AND THE GENERAL  
IMPRESSION WHICH LOCKHEED AND OTHER SCANDALS HAVE GIVEN THAT THE DC  
IS CORRUPT. HE CHARACTERIZED THE ELECTIONS AS EVEN MORE IMPORTANT  
THAN THAT OF 1948 AND THE DC'S CONDITION FAR LESS PROMISING,  
BECAUSE (AMONG OTHER THINGS) THE DC DOES NOT HAVE STRONG LABOR AND  
CHURCH SUPPORT AND THE PCI THEN HAD ONLY 20 PERCENT OF THE VOTE.  
WHILE HE SEES SOME HOPE THAT PROTEST VOTES THAT  
WENT TO THE COMMUNISTS IN JUNE, 1975 MAY WELL RETURN TO THE DC,  
HE NEVERTHELESS REPEATED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS HIS CONCERN THAT THE  
YOUNG WILL VOTE OVERWHELMINGLY FOR THE LEFT.

2. MORO SAID THAT THE DC DECIDED TO GO TO ELECTIONS NOW DESPITE  
THE POOR CONDITION IN WHICH IT FINDS ITSELF, BECAUSE IT WAS FACED  
WITH A CHOICE BETWEEN BRINGING THE COMMUNISTS INTO THE GOVERN-  
ING MAJORITY NOW OR ELECTIONS. THE DC, AS ITS CONGRESS MADE  
CLEAR, CANNOT MAKE THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE (E.E., COMMUNISTS IN  
THE GOVERNMENT WITH THE DC), BECAUSE HE IS CONVINCED THAT ONCE  
IN "THEY WILL NOT GO AWAY". MORO HAD PRAISE FOR THE RENEWAL  
EFFORT THAT WAS STARTED IN THE DC CONGRESS. HOWEVER, APART FROM  
SOME IMPORTANT CHANGES IN THE ELECTORAL LISTS OF CANDIDATES, HE

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SEES NO OTHER POSSIBILITY OF REAL RENEWAL BEFORE THE ELECTIONS.

3. REFERRING TO POST-ELECTION PROBLEMS, MORO SAID THAT KEEPING THE COMMUNISTS OUT OF THE GOVERNMENT WILL OBVIOUSLY DEPEND ON THE ELECTORAL RESULTS AND ON THE PSI. IF THE PCI BECOMES THE LARGEST PARTY IN ITALY, AND THE PCI AND THE PSI TOGETHER HAVE A PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY, MORO HAS NO DOUBT THAT THEY WILL ATTEMPT TO FORM A LEFT-FRONT GOVERNMENT. EVEN IF THE DC REMAINS THE LARGEST PARTY AND THE LEFT DOESN'T GET A PARLIAMENTARY MAJORITY, MORO IS NEVERTHELESS VERY CONCERNED ABOUT PSI ATTITUDES. THE LEADERSHIP OF THAT PARTY, HE SAID, APPEARS TO BE COMMITTING ITSELF TO A POSITION THAT PCI PARTICIPATION IS ESSENTIAL. HE FINDS THIS DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND SINCE AS A PRACTICAL MATTER IT CUTS DOWN THE PSI'S POLITICAL MANEUVERABILITY AFTER THE ELECTIONS, BUT HE INTERPRETS IT AS A SIGN OF THE STRENGTH OF THE PSI'S MOVEMENT TOWARD THE LEFT.

4. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTION ABOUT WHAT ROLE THE UNITED STATES COULD OR SHOULD PLAY DURING THE COMING WEEKS, MORO LIMITED HIS REPLY TO A SUGGESTION THAT WE MAKE A SPECIAL EFFORT TO TRY AND GET MORE FAVORABLE TREATMENT OF THE DC AND ITS GOVERNMENTAL RECORD IN THE AMERICAN PRESS. HE RECOGNIZES THE DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED IN DOING SO, BUT ALSO RECOGNIZES THE IMPORTANCE THAT THE PRESS HAS FOR THE DC'S ELECTORAL FORTUNES. I REMINDED HIM THAT THE DC, AND PARTICULARLY HIS MOST SENIOR LEADERS, HAS NOT BEEN PARTICULARLY COOPERATIVE WITH THE AMERICAN PRESS IN THE RECENT PAST. HE ACCEPTED THIS, MENTIONING THE POSSIBLE EXCUSE THAT AT THE TIMES INVOLVED THE DC LEADERS MAY HAVE BEEN ENGAGED IN THE CONGRESS OR IN VARIOUS DEVELOPMENTS OF THE RECENT POLITICAL CRISIS, BUT HE CLEARLY ACCEPTS THE POINT THAT THE DC COULD DO MUCH BETTER IN PUBLIC RELATIONS. HE REFERRED TO GUIDO BODRATO, ASSISTANT TO ZACCAGNINI, WHO HAS JUST BEEN PUT IN CHARGE OF THE PUBLIC RELATIONS FOR THE DC. MORO CHARACTERIZED HIM AS AN INTELLIGENT, ENERGETIC MAN WHOM HE EXPECTS WILL BE ABLE TO HELP CURE THE DC'S PUBLIC RELATIONS PROBLEMS. APART FROM DC EFFORTS, HOWEVER, MORO VERY MUCH HOPES THAT THE USG WILL MAKE AN EFFORT TO BE HELPFUL IN THIS REGARD. I ASSURED HIM THAT WE WOULD WITHIN THE LIMITS OF OUR CAPABILITY AND PROPRIETY.

5. MORO EXPRESSED GREAT APPRECIATION FOR THE PRESIDENT'S DECISION ON SHOES, WHICH HE CHARACTERIZED AS A "COURAGEOUS" ONE, ESPECIALLY  
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IN VIEW OF THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION IN AMERICA. HE ALSO TOOK THE OCCASION TO EXPRESS APPRECIATION FOR THE PROMPT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE THE USG PROVIDED UNDER THE SWAP ARRANGEMENT.

6. COMMENT: MORO LOOKED AND ACTED IN "GOOD FORM". HE SEEMED ALERT AND WAS CLEAR AND VIGOROUS IN HIS TALK. HE IS, HOWEVER, PLAINLY VERY WORRIED ABOUT THE UPCOMING ELECTION AND ITS POSSIBLE

AFTERMATH.VOLPE

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